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Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ISO-00 EUR-12 CIAE-00 DODE-00
NSAE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00 PM-05 H-02
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2027
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE
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AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
AMEMBASSY GABORONE
AMEMBASSY LAGOS
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO
AMEMBASSY PARIS

UNCLAS PRETORIA 4576

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PDEV, WA
SUBJECT: NAMIBIA: AHTISAARI'S TV INTERVIEW

AN INTERVIEW WITH UN SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE AHTISAARI BY CLIFF SAUNDERS APPEARED ON SABC-TV LAST NIGHT, AUGUST 8. FOLLOWING IS A FAIRLY COMPLETE AND ACCURATE ACCOUNT OF THE INTERVIEW AS CARRIED IN THE CITIZEN AUGUST 9.

BEGIN TEXT:

IF HE AND MR. JUSTICE M.T. STEYN, THE ADMINISTRATOR GENERAL FOR SWA, STUCK TO THE LETTER AND SPIRIT OF THE WESTERN PROPOSALS, THEN: "I THINK WE CAN AVOID LOTS OF
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MISUNDERSTANDINGS THAT OTHERWISE MIGHT ARISE," UN SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE, MR. MARTTI AHTISAARI, SAID LAST NIGHT ON SABC-TV.

ASKED IF HE HAD NOTED ANY DIFFERENCES BETWEEN HIMSELF AND MR. JUSTICE STYEN, AND WHETHER THESE CONSTITUTED A STUMBLING BLOCK TO THEIR COOPERATION,

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MR. AHTISAARI SAID: "ACTUALLY, WE HAVEN'T GONE THAT FAR YET. THIS WAS AN INTRODUCTORY MEETING.

"WE WERE INTRODUCING OUR SENIOR ADVISERS, TRYING TO GET THEM TOGETHER TO START WORKING, SO WE HAVEN'T COME THAT FOR YET."

MR. AHTISAARI WAS ASKED WHAT HE REGARDED AS THE SPIRITOF THE PROPOSALS.

"IT IS OBVIOUSLY A COMPROMISE BETWEEN DIFFERENT VIEWS.

"OBVIOUSLY, WHEN YOU LOOK AT A COMPROMISE, VERY OFTEN NEITHER OF THE PARTIES IS VERY HAPPY ABOUT IT. THE IMPORTANT THING IS THAT BOTH MAJOR PARTIES HAVE AGREED ON THE PROPOSAL. THAT IS THE IMPORTANT THING."

ASKED WHETHER HE REGARDED THE SO-CALLED GENTLEMEN'S AGREEMENTS IN THE WESTERN PLAN AS A WEAKNESS, HE SAID: "AS A MATTER OF FACT, I FIND THE DOCUMENT FAIRLY PRECISE ON A NUMBER OF ISSUES. OBVIOUSLY, THERE ARE CERTAIN AREAS WHERE A CERTAIN DEGREE OF UNCERTAINTY IS STILL THERE.

"BUT I THINK THAT ON THE BASIC QUESTIONS, ONE
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CAN DRAW A LOT FROM THE PROPOSALS."

IN REPLY TO ANOTHER QUESTION, MR. AHTISAARI SAID HE TRIED TO IMAGINE THERE SHOULD NOT BE ANY PROBLEMATIC AREAS IN TERMS OF THE PROPOSALS. "AS I SAID, IT'S TOO EARLY NOW TO START SAYING WHAT THOSE MIGHT BE, BECAUSE WE ARE IN THE BEGINNING OF OUR EXERCISE HERE."
END TEXT.
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